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### ***Kernan Names Kennedy to Head Region One; IU Northwest Selected for Commerce Office in Gary***

GARY — The modernization of the Indiana Department of Commerce continued today as Lt. Governor Joe Kernan named John Kennedy director of Region One and announced that Indiana University Northwest will serve as its headquarters.

Encompassing Jasper, Lake, Newton, and Porter counties, the Region One office will serve as a “one-stop shop” for the state’s economic development activities in the area.

“We couldn’t be more excited with the combination of John Kennedy and IU Northwest,” said Kernan, who serves as director of the Department of Commerce. “Putting John’s experience and knowledge together with the world-class resources available at the university will ensure the success of this office.

“This regional approach is a bold change to the way we attract and keep quality businesses,” the lieutenant governor added. “It is arguably the most important undertaking in the agency’s history, and we’re confident that it will pay off with more good jobs for Hoosiers.”

A lifelong resident of the area, Kennedy currently serves as the associate director of economic development for Northwest Indiana Forum, Inc. Prior to joining Northwest Indiana Forum, Inc., Kennedy was a broker’s assistant with REFCO, Inc. in Chicago and spent time as a government relations assistant with the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation. He graduated from Fairfield University in Fairfield, Conn., in 1991.

“John brings a wealth of expertise to this position,” said Kernan. “He’s lived and worked in this area for his entire life and has a strong and varied background in economic development and related fields that will be a major asset for the entire region.”

As regional director, Kennedy will act as Commerce’s representative in the field and will be responsible for the overall management of the regional office and delivery of agency services. In addition, Kennedy will develop and maintain partnerships with regional business and community organizations and their leaders, collaborate with regional governments and local organizations on economic development projects, evaluate regional development needs and formulate a regional strategic plan, as well as educate the public on Commerce programs and services.

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"I'm excited to be on the Commerce team and look forward to getting out and meeting with the folks that call Region One home," said Kennedy. "We've got a lot of challenges, but also a lot of opportunities in this region. However, we are fortunate to have so many quality people and organizations in this region who are all working toward a common goal – making Indiana stronger."

Partnering with IU Northwest, the new office will be housed in the Library Conference Center located 3500 Broadway and is expected to be operational by the end of the year.

"We are fortunate to have an outstanding network of higher education institutions because they play a crucial role in economic development," said Kernan. "Putting this regional office at IU Northwest makes sense – this gives us another opportunity to work with a quality institution in which we share a common goal – the improvement of citizens' lives. We are excited about the new location and look forward to a great relationship with IU Northwest."

Lt. Governor Kernan announced plans to modernize the Department of Commerce in July after more than a year and a half of research. This morning Kernan named the Region Two director in South Bend, and earlier in the month he named regional directors and office locations in Regions Ten (Bloomington), Four (Kokomo), Six (Terre Haute) and Nine (Madison).

For more information on the Indiana Department of Commerce, the new regional offices or its programs, contact Jeff Harris, media relations director, at 317.232.2464 or visit the Web site at [www.indianacommerce.com](http://www.indianacommerce.com)

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